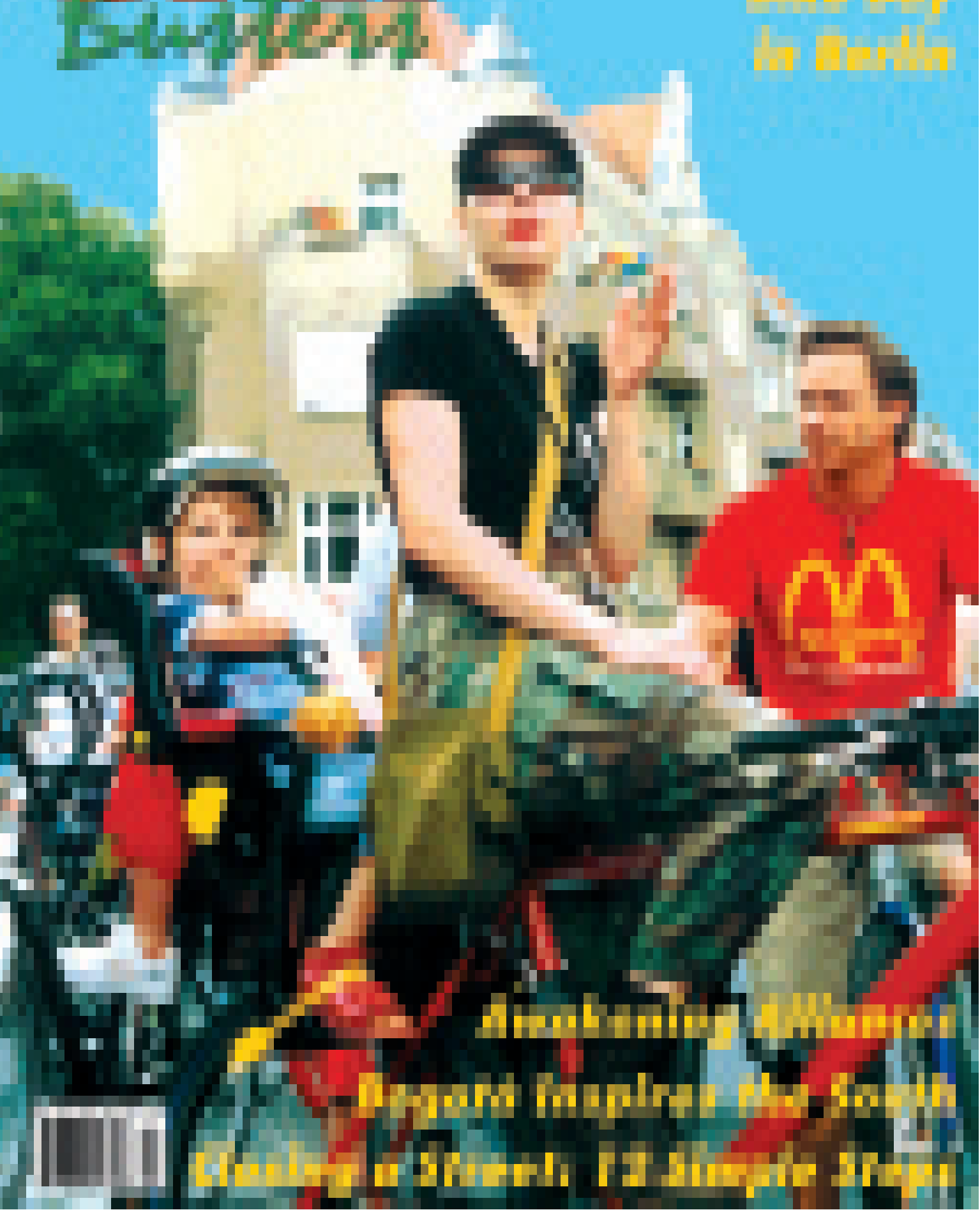


# CAR

1994

*Celebrating  
European  
Bike Day  
in Berlin*



*A week-long celebration  
begins in Berlin, the South  
Coast, and 20 other cities. 120 pages, 2 pages*



# CAR Bust-

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Submission deadline for issue 21:  
August 15, 2004.

Reprints welcome with a credit to Car Busters and a reference to Carbusters.org.

Subscription/membership info and coupon: page 29 and 30.

ISSN: 1213-7154 / MK ÈR: E 100018

Printed in the Czech Republic on 100% recycled paper by VAMB. Pre-press by QT Studio.

Distributed by Doormouse (Canada); AK Press, Desert Moon, Tower/MTS, and Ubiquity (US); INK (UK); and many others. See <www.carbusters.org/magazine> for a partial list of distribution outlets.

This publication was funded in part by the European Commission via the European Voluntary Service programme. The contents certainly do not reflect the position of the European Commission or its national agency.



Car Busters is a member of INK, the Independent News Collective, trade association of the UK alternative press.



Car Busters is a project of World Carfree Network (Worldcarfree.net).



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Front cover: By Tanja Eskola. Back cover: World Carfree Day poster by Tanja Eskola. Above: "My Karma Ran Over my Dogma" by Stig.

## Issue 20:

# Carfree Day On the Way

At the beginning of June, the World Carfree Network coordination team went to Berlin to have the last preparation meeting for Towards Carfree Cities IV. Berlin is an inspirational city for us because cycling and other forms of alternative transportation play such an important part in the spirit and life of the city. Bike paths, racks and other infrastructure are everywhere throughout the city and a diverse group of people can be seen in Berlin's bike lanes.

This bike-friendly culture culminated in the Sternfahrt, or European Bike Day, when close to 250,000 people rode their bikes through Berlin.

However, our return to Prague was a brutal reminder of a reality where city streets are free-ways and the car is clearly the culturally favoured means of transportation. Unlike Berlin, Prague is an unfriendly, if not dangerous place, to move around in. Cars park on sidewalks and there are only a handful of bike lanes, none of which are in the city centre.

This culture was reflected in Prague's contradictory support

for World Carfree Day 2003, on the one hand, and its refusal to close down any streets, even temporarily, on the other hand.

Unfortunately, Prague is not unique and many other cities also suffer similar problems; we only highlight it because it is the city we live and work in everyday. It is not our choice to live a life of exhaust(ion) due to the constant impediments to freely moving around. Given this, it is in all our best interests to work for an alternative model.

In her article on bringing together the disability rights and the carfree movement, Arie Farnam shows that many people share the same desires as carfree advocates. Farnam's example is just one possibility of people from diverse backgrounds

forming alliances and rallying around the carfree cause. Then, when the time is right to convince local governments to make a street carfree or to build carfree housing, the support will be there.

Even if local councils are unsupportive, as was the case in Prague, carfree advocates should not be discouraged and take inspiration from cities where alternative forms of transport are a fundamental, democratic component of city life, as is the case in Bogotá. In her article, Gabrielle Hermann points out how this model is influencing the entire Latin American region.

In this issue we also offer solutions and advice, both official and radical, on how to make



## Towards Carfree Cities IV

July 18-24 2004  
Humboldt University  
Berlin, Germany

TCCF-IV brings together people promoting practical alternatives to car dependence - walking, cycling and public transport, and the transformation of our cities into human-scaled, pedestrian environments rich in public space and community life.

[www.worldcarfree.net/conference](http://www.worldcarfree.net/conference)

# Letters



"Mommy, is

Daddy a Monster?"

When I used to ask groups of school children what they thought was wrong with cars, 90% of the hands shot up and they cried in unison: pollution. (The other 10% thought nothing wrong at all.) Talk to the average adult and you get the same result.

Let's say for a moment that someone invented a car that ran on tap water. Hurray, most people would yell, we can drive to the ends of the Earth without feeling guilty.

If you could express the evil of cars in percentages (well, you can't really) I'd give pollution and global warming only 15%; another 15% for killing and maiming thousands upon thousands each year; and, 10% for turning people into monsters the moment they enter their cars (they don't even have to drive – just play their radio full blast and empty their ashtrays).

So that leaves 60% for having systematically destroyed our villages, towns, cities, and country-sides; for having created endless roads, flyovers, shopping malls, gas stations, fast food joints, and parking lots, where nature was before. Well, I don't have to tell you (Car Busters readers know all that). And for me personally, for having almost single-handedly destroyed everything that was beautiful left over from earlier eras.

Does anyone really think fuel-efficient or non-polluting cars would have done any better?

Wolfgang Zuckermann  
Avignon, France

## The Importance of

### Sister-City Relationships

Thanks for the in-depth look at China's move toward "advanced technology vehicles." Certainly we can all work toward and celebrate this re-markable objective, depending on the definition!

Many of us feel that chopsticks,



*Here is how I deal with not driving in cars, by the way...and no one seems to want to harrass me when I'm riding this bicycle! My husband, Jim Spann, and daughter Caitlin Hurley, are in the background.  
- Gail Spann, chairperson, Texas Bicycle Coalition*

umbrellas and bicycles are indeed advanced technology and hard to improve on. We hold these to be self-evident: simple tools that lend themselves to a quality of life wonderfully mature, local, and personal – and by extension, profoundly social. Several of Ivan Illich's books, available in a dozen languages, elaborate upon this. Henri Michaux's *A Barbarian in Asia* nicely compliments.

Ignoring the wise counsel of Chow En-lai, who while supporting China's "four modernisations" often saluted China's bicycle-friendly cities, the current mayors of Beijing and Shanghai have allowed some restrictions on bicycle use, perhaps reluctantly.

These mayors and their advisors need to be interviewed, and often! We need open and lively exchanges between our different cultures and policies, but exchanges relentlessly focused on specifics, not abstractions... like what makes a city attractive and livable?

Your article touches briefly on the Kunming-Zurich sister cities and how it helped bring together Chinese and Swiss planners for a conference and several transportation projects. I would urge planners/urbanists/car busters in every country to explore similar opportunities.

Sister-city relationships

provide the useful, needed infrastructure for a great variety of constructive people-to-people exchanges and programmes. There are close to 100 U.S.-Chinese sister cities. Washington-Beijing and Philadelphia-Tiajin are among them.

The latter we utilised to Philadelphia's great advantage and, in the long run, Tiajin's.



(We being the Greater Philadelphia Bicycle Coalition, which in early 1983 published an Employers Handbook on Bicycle Commuting.) Working closely with the City's Director of Commerce, Richard Doran, we sent out copies of the handbook, complete with a brochure and our regional bike map, to more than 100 area employers. It's taken decades, but Philadelphia has gradually become a "bicycling capital," with several hundred miles of bike lanes, close to 2,000 new bike racks citywide, front-end bike racks on more than 300 buses, etc. Let me conclude with a few lines from Doran's covering letter of May 11, 1983:

"Last year I had the opportunity to carry out a trade mission to the People's Republic of China, where

bicycles move one-quarter of the Earth's population every day. As Philadelphia's City Representative, I was fortunate enough to be given one of these 'people movers' while visiting our sister city of Tiajin. The experience made me much more aware of what the bicycle has to offer Americans as a healthful, low-cost, space-conserving means of everyday transportation and recreation. It has also made me aware of the need for both the public and private sector to accommodate this efficient vehicle."

John Dowling, co-founder  
US-Cuba Sister Cities

Association

**You People Are Kidding**

Are you freaks for real. Wow it is real amazing what socialism can do to the mind, you guys are like crack heads. So when the world is "Car Free" will you start the "Horse Free" world. my god all those poor animals that will be enslaved by humans. How about a "human Free" world. Go get a car and see the world outside that 4 city block area you live in.

sam t

[Ed. note: Perhaps sam t can start a punctuation- free world, given his radical resistance to the use of the question mark.]

**Hi Carbusting Comrades!**

Thank you for your world updates [World Carfree News]. They inspire me a lot.

I am from the Philippines. We are a tropical country where, like many Third World countries, the contrasts of realities are glaring. The usual heartaches scream at our faces – very poor public transport, private vehicle-biased policies, big private motor vehicles (usually owned by traditional politicians) clogging our streets, sidewalks predominantly for private motor vehicles, and very many pedestrian-unfriendly symbols. These include high footbridges inaccessible to the elderly and disabled, car owners parking on

pedestrian lanes and sidewalks, and very toxic signs telling pedestrians to keep off.

Much sunshine to you all,  
Dazzle K. Rivera and Mithi  
Manila, Philippines

**Ignoring the Fast Lane**

I called Congressman Jim Oberstar's office about "The Fast Act" back in December and was told by one of his aides, "Don't worry, it'll never pass." I called and wrote an open letter to the Surface Transportation Policy Project in Washington DC, which was presented to their board by a former employee Andrea Broadus. She told me their reply was "We don't have time for this...people here all have other projects they're working on."

I wrote Car Busters, Center for American Progress and Environmental Defense (which was crazy enough to endorse this legislation). I wrote and visited local groups and I brought it up to all my state and national legislators in calls and in person. No one took me seriously and I was resoundingly ignored.

Well, it just passed – fast lane toll pricing – (April 4, 2004, New York Times, page 11). Congress has just unleashed a new revenue source for highway agencies all across America. They were already the most politically powerful entities in state government (due to gas tax revenue). Now they



Ozoncluster, by Wosky



"I am the prototypical 'motorhead.' I live, breathe, work and love automotive machinery. I wear the badge proudly.

My motto is simple: If I'm not burning hydrocarbons, I'm not having fun."



# CAR CULT REVIEW

**New Red Light Pulls Quick Change on Speeders**  
The [San Francisco] Bay Area has implemented the first traffic signal with the power to punish speeders, forcing Tami Perry to brake right in the middle of an important telephone call.

"I think it's a bunch of bull," Perry says of the signal in Pleasanton after it went from green to yellow to red because she was going over 40 mph in a 35-mph zone.

Drivers are met by an electronic sign that flashes the speed limit. A camera about 350 feet from the intersection measures their speed and directs the signal to turn red for anyone exceeding the speed limit by more than five mph.

Chris Bruno, a 41-year-old San Mateo resident who works in Pleasanton, says that the city is asking for trouble. "These guys don't know what goes on in the minds of speeders," he said. "Don't antagonise someone who is

already antagonistic."  
- San Francisco Chronicle

**Professor Develops Robotic Highway Cones**  
The orange construction cones and barrels that litter America's highways may be going high-tech.

A University of Nebraska professor has developed robotic cones and barrels that move according to computer commands made miles away. They can even be programmed to move on their own at any particular part of the day, says Shane Farritor, an assistant professor of mechanical engineering at the university.

"It just seems like a very good application for robots," he says.

The robots are placed at the bottom of the cones and barrels and are small enough not to greatly alter the appearance of the seemingly ubiquitous construction aides. "Normally there's a kind of rubbery, black

base to them," Farritor says, "We replace that with a robot."

While prototypes have been made, they are not in use anywhere. Farritor says he has applied for a patent and is considering what to do next.

He is thinking about starting a small business and trying to market the robots to road departments and others across the country who may benefit from them.

- Associated Press

**Ford Goes for "Chick Lit"**  
Ford of Britain has enlisted British writer Carole Matthews as part of an unusual marketing campaign. The author, whose novel *The Sweetest Taboo* is part of the "chick lit" genre marketed primarily to women, has agreed to have the heroine of her book and the female leads in future stories drive a Ford Fiesta.

In Matthews, Ford found a novelist who had a lifelong love affair with cars and who was eager to lend her name to the company for promotional purposes. In exchange for her cooperation in the promotional deal, Matthews will receive a free new Fiesta every six months for the duration of her contract plus an undisclosed sum of money.

"Every month I write a short story which is shamelessly promoting the Ford Fiesta," says Matthews, who worked as a secretary and then as a beauty therapist before she became an author. She also thinks that the car industry ignores women's needs. Besides the usual complaint about being ignored by sales persons who then talk to women's partners, she says, "I wish car manufacturers would make handles that wouldn't pull your fingernails off."

- Automotive News Europe

**Germans in Jams Turn to Sex**  
A third of German motorists fantasise about sex when stuck in traffic while only 10 percent



*Taking a swim: In the Netherlands, a fire on board the ironically named "Sea Trust" gave its cargo a quick rinse. The used cars were bound from Antwerp to Lebanon.*



# Industry Watch

*Digging the dirt on your favourite corporations*

## Pollution is Good for You

The late Ronald Reagan once said that trees pollute more than cars. The quotable ex-US president could have easily been a spokesperson for any number of car companies, including, Subaru, the company labeled as one of the ten worst greenwashers of 2003 by Green Life, a non-profit organisation, in its "Don't Be Fooled" Report published in April.

"Increasingly, Americans are basing their purchasing decisions on the environmental and social impacts of products and manufacturers," writes author Geoff Johnson. "According to the Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability Journal, in 2000, this growing market represented \$546 billion globally and \$226.8 billion in the US.

Sociologist Paul Ray forecasts that half of all Americans may become socially conscious consumers within ten years. The organic foods and beverages market is growing 20-25% per year, while JD Power and Associates projects that sales of hybrid-electric vehicles will rise 400% between 2003 and 2005."

It is no surprise that car companies are trying to play down the dirtier aspects of their vehicles. The report singles out Subaru. "Subaru is the first automaker to make minor changes to reclassify a sedan as a truck, thereby setting an unfortunate example for manufacturers looking for a new angle on dodging fuel economy standards."

"For years, Subaru has successfully marketed an environmental commitment and respect for the outdoors. Subaru supports dozens of science, outdoors and environmental organisations, including the American Meteorological Society, the National Ski Patrol and

Leave No Trace, a non-profit that promotes outdoor ethics."

"In contrast to stereotypes about selfish, insensitive SUV owners, [people who own a] Subaru car are portrayed as respectful and adventurous nature lovers."

"Deer Spotting," a television commercial from Subaru's 2002 'When You Get It, You Get It' campaign, depicts a man and woman driving an Outback through the forest. They silently come upon a herd of feeding deer. The couple stops and observes the tranquil scene, until a noisy SUV pulls up alongside the Outback and scatters the deer. The SUV's driver, a man in a fishing vest, lowers his window asks, 'What are we looking at?'"

"Don't Be Fooled" can be seen in its entirety at [Thegreenlife.org](http://Thegreenlife.org).  
- based on [Greenlife.org](http://Greenlife.org)

## The Need for Speed

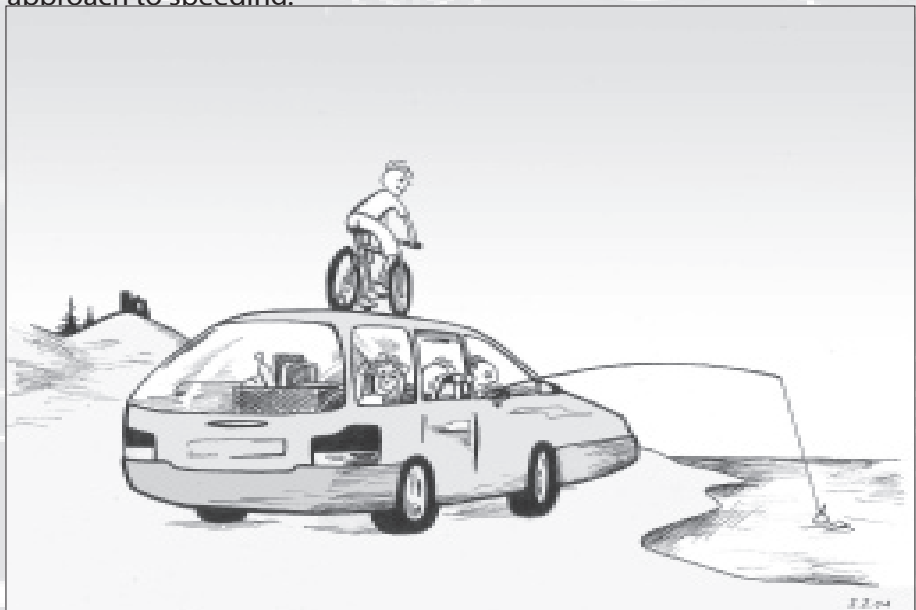
In a recent editorial from the New Zealand Herald entitled "Speed kills, and We're All Too Prepared to Accept It," Paul Thomas points out the inherent hypocrisies among both industry and government's approach to speeding.

It was recently decided that New Zealand police would hand out 25% more speeding tickets in the next year.

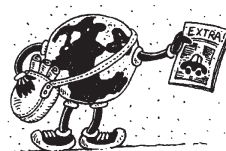
"Anticipating renewed accusations that the government was using the police as unofficial tax collectors," writes Thomas, "the Police Minister burst into print. Last year, we were told, speeding was a factor in 167 deaths and 623 serious injuries, and the estimated social cost of speeding-related crashes was about \$890 million."

"The previous day, the same newspaper [...] had a double-page spread on European cars. All four stories – couched, of course, in the tractor-manual prose of the automobile industry PR hand-out – laboured the point that these machines were un-bloody-believably fast."

"In the space of half an hour (or even, conceivably the same three-minute ad break), we can watch a Land Transport Safety Authority infomercial in which a physics professor demonstrates that an extra 5 kmh can be the difference between a minor ding and a serious crash, and a car advert featuring arty footage of the latest souped-up dream machine howling down the



# World News



## Europe

**Transport Trends In New Member States Causing Alarm**  
EU - Transport trends in the new member states of the European Union are a long way from the level of sustainability implicit in EU transport policy-making, writes European Federation for Transport and Environment (T&E) in a recent bulletin.

On May 1, the EU welcomed 10 new members mainly from Central and Eastern Europe. T&E has published a series of two-page "fact files" showing the state of transport in seven of the 10 countries plus Romania and Bulgaria.

"The fact files show there are common gaps and a lack of vision for sustainable transport. The National Development Plans produced by the acceding states are merely a compilation of measures without a broader strategy to underpin them," says Mari Jüssi of the Estonian Green Movement.

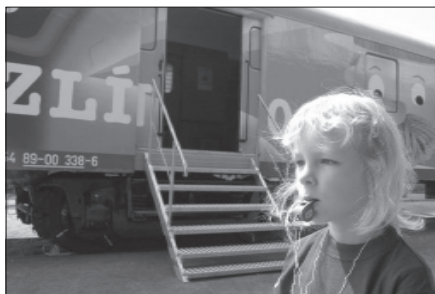
The documents show that spending on road schemes is far more advanced than spending on public transport, cycling and pedestrian projects. In addition, the hasty privatisation of rail networks in some countries has made it difficult to get EU funding for improvements to rail networks.

In Poland, for example, public transport passenger numbers in cities fell from nine billion in 1985 to 5.5 billion in 2000 (ticket prices for urban public transport tripled in price and car fuels prices fell in the same time period).

However, there are some causes for optimism, such as the Gdansk cycle network, and the introduction of low-floor buses and trams in several Czech cities.

- compiled from T&E reports

FRANCE - Paris' city council has passed a resolution calling for a ban of SUVs within city limits. If municipal leaders decide to accept the proposal in an overall



plan to reduce the city's gridlock, it will go into effect at the beginning of 2006.

"We have no interest in having SUVs in the city. They're dangerous to others and take up too much space," says Paris' Deputy Mayor Denis Baupin. "Our idea is to limit the circulation of the most-polluting vehicles. That means SUVs and lots of other vehicles that don't meet European pollution standards," he adds.

Since a Socialist-Green coalition won City Hall in 2001, Paris' government has been proactive in setting aside special travel lanes for buses and

bicycles. Planners hope to reduce the environmental impact of Paris' traffic congestion even more by keeping out those vehicles that pollute the most for no functional reason. SUVs currently make up about 5% of the French auto fleet.

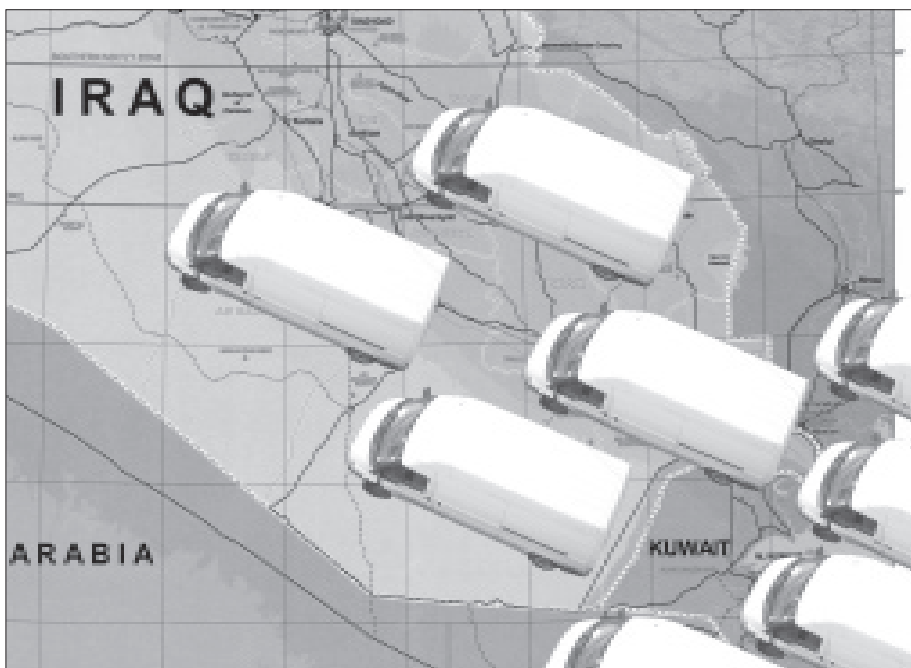
- E Magazine, June 22

**Film Festival on Track**  
CZECH REPUBLIC - How do you make a festival come to people instead of the other way round? The organisers of the International Film Festival for Young People seem to have found a solution. It's called the cinema train, or "cinema on the rails."

## Asia/Pacific

Throughout the month of June, the cinema train will travel around the country stopping in various towns and cities for several screenings a day that kids can attend.

The idea of going to see a film on a train is a novelty that will attract kids - and not all of them would be able to come to Zlín for the annual film festival - so the cinema comes to them instead, explains Vítězslav Jandák, the president of the festival. There



**Less Talk and  
More Action Against SUVs**



is no fee and during screenings the train is parked at the railway station of the given town.

- Radio Prague, May 29

#### Road Builders on the Move

UK - Against a background of impassioned debate, a powerful group of motoring and business groups has united to launch a nationwide advertising drive calling for nearly 1,000 miles of motorway to relieve chronic and growing congestion across the UK.

The £250,000 crusade is being mounted partly in response to pressure from a rival coalition of 29 environmental and social justice groups which have deluged ministers with postcards lobbying for more sustainable transport.

It also comes at a critical time for future policy, with ministers planning this summer major statements on rail reform and road pricing, and a new 10-year transport strategy.

- The Observer, May 16

#### Cars Set Sail for Iraq

IRAQ - In addition to the country's more pressing concerns, the administrative chaos following the US occupation of Iraq has led to a rapid influx of used cars.

Under Saddam Hussein, automobiles carried an import tariff of close to 100%. Combined with little free capital, this led to very low levels of motorisation, despite the low price of gasoline. In the 12 months since the US invasion of Iraq, tariffs have not been enforced. This has led to well over half a billion dollars worth of car purchases coming in from one port alone, according to people familiar with these shipments interviewed by the Institute for Transport and Development Policy (ITDP).

Since last April, over 250,000 cars are estimated as having gone into Iraq from Aqaba [Jordan]. Minivans are particularly popular.

- ITDP's Sustainable Transport e-Update, May

#### Salvaging Jewish Heritage in China, Block by Block



*Cars parked in the bike lane outside of a downtown Toronto, Canada police station.*

CHINA - The North Bund in Shanghai, including the old Jewish ghetto, is facing redevelopment.

Almost all the Jews, except a few descendants of mixed parentage, resettled in New York, Los Angeles, Tel Aviv and elsewhere as the Communists took power in 1949. They left behind a charming neighborhood with row houses, schools, a synagogue, a park and a Little Vienna Cafe. The district is now inhabited by working-class Chinese.

When Shanghai officials announced urban renewal plans for the North Bund almost two years ago, they said they envisioned a modern business and residential district with skyscrapers, apartment buildings, cruise ship docks and an

#### The Americas

enormous Ferris wheel.

But momentum is growing to preserve the entire neighborhood. An alternate plan has been drawn up by two Canadians, Ian Leventhal and Thomas M. Rado. They formed a company called Living Bridge that is trying to raise \$450 million to preserve at least 50 ghetto buildings in a nine-block area.

If district officials can be convinced of the financial

viability of the Leventhal-Rado restoration plan – which also calls for a boutique hotel, an extensive memorial park and a carfree pedestrian zone – it would then go to the Shanghai city government for consideration when they auction the area to developers.

- New York Times, May 31

#### Breathing Easily on Earth Day

KOREA - In celebration of Earth Day, a Central Seoul main street was carfree for a whole day.

Thirty-five environmental groups hosted a colour-ful array of events under the slogan "Agricuture of Life, Breathing Earth." [Although some meaning is lost in translation here, we can still wonder what it would be like to breath the Earth. - ed.]

The street festival included an Earth Day celebration ceremony, bicycle riding, flea markets and inline skate performances.

Local governments, civic and regional environmental groups across the country also staged events such as bicycle riding, street cleaning, and photo exhibitions.

- Korean Times, April 22

#### Driver Was Text-Messaging Before Fatal Crash

NEW ZEALAND - A driver lost control of his car and was killed while text-messaging, a

Palmerston North inquest was told.

As well as texting, Ryan James Townsend, 20, had been drinking, and driving above the speed limit, too.

Coroner Graham Hubbard said there was a public debate about the hazards of cellphone use and text-messaging while driving.

"They are a dangerous distraction," he said. "I don't discount the alcohol level, but I do have to underline the fact that text-messaging is a dangerous occupation while driving."

The driver of an oncoming car suffered serious injuries. He told police he had no time to react when approaching headlights suddenly veered into his path. The court was told his full recovery will take about two years.

One eyewitness said that Townsend's car was going about 120 kmh when it passed him.

- New Zealand Herald, June 11

**Toronto Police's "Cycle Right" is a Sham**  
CANADA - On June 7, the Toronto Police Service announced the commencement of their "Cycle Right" campaign under the guise of providing better safety for Toronto cyclists. According to a press release by Darren Stehr, editor of the "Get Out of the Bike Lane" website, "Cycle Right is nothing more than a hypocritical publicity stunt by the very same people who ignore their duty and put cyclists' lives at risk everyday."

Stehr notes that outside a downtown police station vehicles park in the bike lanes with impunity. Phone calls requesting action resulted in laughter or a run-around.

Most bike lanes, like those outside the police

## The Hummer Humbled

USA - For years it has been the king of the American road – the bane of environmentalists and the joy of those wanting the biggest, baddest car on the high-way. Yet now sales of the Hummer, made famous by Arnold Schwarzenegger, are skidding to a halt.

"The H2 has seen its day come and go. [With rising petrol prices] it does not seem to make sense any more," said Wes Brown, a car industry analyst. But the Hummer

## Africa

station, are in "no stopping zones." There is no provision in the Highway Traffic Act to allow for stopping a vehicle in the "no stopping zone" except in the case of an emergency.

However, The Globe and Mail reported that one parking enforcement supervisor said they tend to cut delivery trucks some slack.

In one study by the Advocacy for Respect for Cyclists, says Stehr, it was found that over a one-hour period 50 vehicles parked in a busy bike lane in downtown Toronto, causing over 150 incidents where the bike lane was not available to the cyclist.

- compiled from press

release

## Cyclists Arrested And Fined at Critical Mass in Montreal

CANADA - Police intervened in a recent Critical Mass in Montreal. Police officers pulled their cruisers in front of the ride, got out of their cars, and began pulling cyclists off their bikes in mid-flight. One cruiser flung its doors open, right in the path of one of the cyclists. The unfortunate cyclist who slammed into the cruiser's door was handcuffed and taken away.

Besides the one arrested, three other riders were given tickets. The charges ranged from running red lights to obstructing police. Other riders assembled on the corner were threatened with charges if they did not immediately disperse.

The police even started threatening random cyclists who stopped to see what was happening. When the ordeal was over, more than CN\$500 in charges from the police had been doled out.

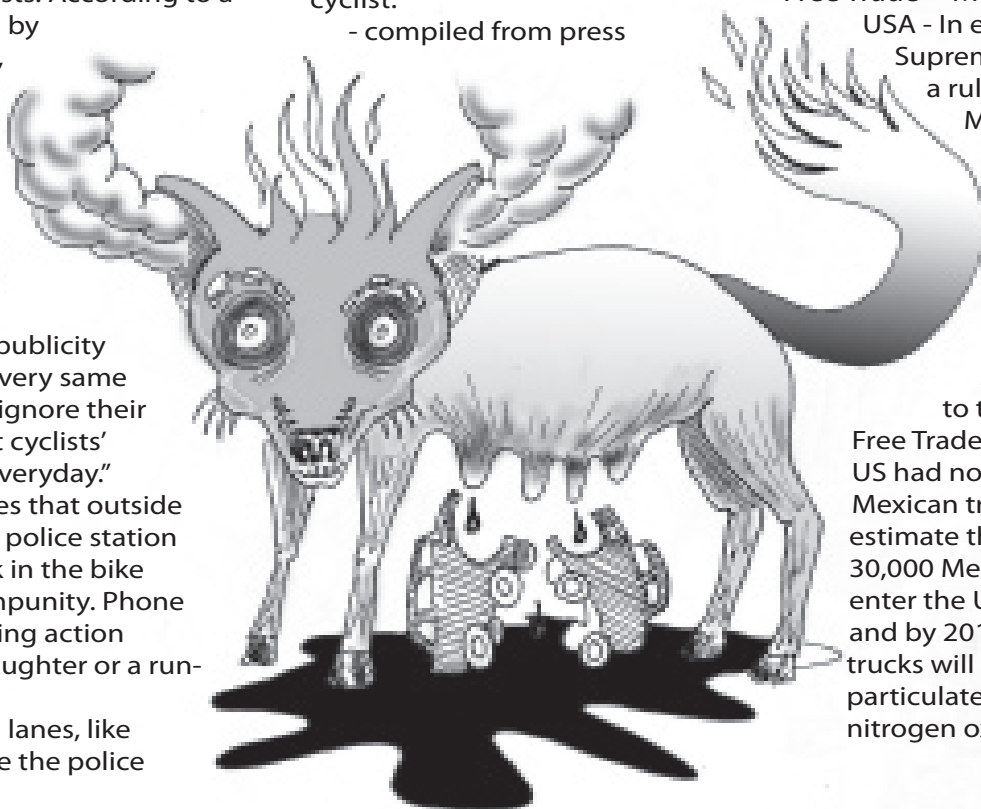
- Centre for Media Alternatives

Quebec, May 5

## Free Trade = More Pollution

USA - In early June, the US Supreme Court made a ruling allowing Mexican trucks to enter US roads – even if they break America's more stringent emissions standards.

The court said that thanks to the North America Free Trade Agreement, the US had no right to exclude Mexican trucks. Analysts estimate that more than 30,000 Mexican trucks could enter the US this summer and by 2010, Mexican trucks will emit twice the particulate matter and nitrogen oxides as their



# Action!



Automat

*Prague parents defiantly cross one of Prague's many crosswalks, which are often ineffective at slowing down car drivers.*

## World Naked Bike Ride

More than 29 cities throughout the world celebrated World Naked Bike ride in June, including São Paulo, where two riders showed up on a cold, cloudy day; Zaragoza, Spain where 400 nude cyclists biked for an hour through the city centre, and; Chicago where 250 bikers foiled a police plot to stop the event (according to [Worldnakedbikeride.org](http://Worldnakedbikeride.org)).

In Appeldoorn, The Netherlands, one rider, Rens Duijsens, reports continual demands by the police to put on clothes. But, after one such demand, he says, "we lost sight of the police, and off went the clothes again."

"There is nudity in the paper. There is nudity in advertisements. There is nudity on the bill-boards. There is nudity on TV (we were nude on TV), but not in real life!"

- compiled from various reports

## Car-Dodging Baby Carriages in Prague

As part of a week of street safety organised by the European Economic Commission of the UN,

the Prague-based group, Auto-Mat, initiated a different kind of Critical Mass – mothers and fathers deftly dodging cars while pushing their baby carriages.

Competitors with physical disabilities also took part in this dangerous and obstacle-ridden rally along the sidewalks [pavements] and pedestrian crossings of one Prague neighbourhood. Prague mothers, and also fathers, wanted to bring attention to the parked cars that crowd Prague's sidewalks.

The main slogan of the week

was "being considerate means being safe."

- Auto-Mat

## Was Lenin Carfree?

Russian cities had a string of successful carfree events in the first half of this year. It began in Belgorod where the city council accepted a proposal for quarterly Carfree Days. The first one took place on March 18. One city official in attendance said "we need to think about transit problems more thoroughly, if we



Ciclonudista

*The fourth annual Ciclonudista in Zaragoza, Spain attracted more than 400 cyclists.*





are able to go without cars today.”

One month later, Moscow had its largest Critical Mass ever. It was organised and supported by the Carfree Russia movement, Muscovites for the Tram, and other ecogroups and activists. The initiative met with support from the city’s biking community, and about 150 people gathered in one of Moscow’s central squares.

Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod were also the site for the “Transportation Game.” In Moscow, 18 pairs of people raced across two districts for three and half hours using five types of local mass transit, completing tasks at each of the four control points.

Inspired by the huge success in Moscow, St. Petersburg conducted its own Critical Mass. It was the first strongly pronounced carfree action in former Leningrad. In spite of expectations, city officials,

pedestrians and even car owners were positive about it. St. Petersburg is known not only for its famous architecture, but also for city officials’ plans to ban bike usage on central streets and close tram lines.

After the success of these events, it was decided to continue to promote the Critical Mass idea all over the Russian Federation and in neighbouring countries.

- Carfree Russia

### Koreans Protest to Protect Forest

In the name of the Korean clawed salamander and the white-naped crane, Green Korea has tried to sue the Kyungbu high speed train (KTX), which is supposed to pass through Chunsung Mountain, located in Kyung-nam Yang-san.

Aside from the salamander and the crane, animals whose homes will be endangered by

the construction, which will contaminate fresh water sources, include the otter, leopard cat, and Korean sable.

This prompted the formation of “Friends of the Salamander,” which gathered 170,000 signatures throughout Korea in support of a lawsuit against KTX on behalf of the salamander. The court turned it down because a salamander has no right to sue, but Green Korea is appealing the decision. A group of children visited the construction site and sang a song for heavy equipment and wrote a letter to it.

Also, a Korean Buddhist nun named Jiyul has conducted a series of hunger strikes in protest of the KTX construction at Chunsung Mountain.

“It’s a really hard struggle,” says Hahm Eun Hye who works with Green Korea, “because KTX is supported by the government.”

by Lisa Logan

In May, New York City celebrated Bike Month. And May 13 to 16, the fourth annual Bicycle Film Festival held screenings at the Anthology Film Archives in Manhattan’s East Village honouring bicycle culture.

Films featured this first night included Drag Race New York City, which sees cyclists narrowly outwitting traffic through Manhattan’s busiest routes and Bike Thief, a comical experiment in stealing one’s own bike. Other films included the animated Bike Ride, where the protagonist rides 50 miles to see the girl who quickly dumps



him, and Amsterdam: The Bicycling Capitol of Europe.

Brendt Barbur, the festival organiser, decided to start the Bicycle Film Festival after being hit by a bus while he

was riding his bike. This accident made him angry, and organising the festival was his way of taking action. He wanted to celebrate bicycles in a non-political, and “fun” way. He originally planned to only hold one festival as a way to give back to the community, but when the screenings were received with success and

enthusiasm, he was encouraged to continue it into the fourth year.

“The mission of the Bicycle Film Festival,” says Barbur, “is not to villify car drivers or suburbanites.”

“I think New York is a perfect city to limit car usage. We are the ‘New Amsterdam.’ That is the name of New York from before, so I think we can use it as a model. The city is essentially flat and [is a] high-density [environment].”

“At work and in other places, I think economics works with movement. When things are stagnating, that’s when things fail. I think if you have a city that’s stagnating, when movement can’t happen, when merchandise can’t move from here to there, you have an economy within a city that is being hurt.”

Although many people say





# Celebrating European Bike Day

On Sunday, June 6, 250,000 cyclists cruised through the city of Berlin as part of European Bike Day, or Sternfahrt, and made it clear that the bicycle has even more potential to be promoted as a means of transport.

The European Bike Day is a demonstration that welcomes everyone, says the ride's organisers, ADFC, and is not about speed or athletic ability. The motto for the festival was "Respect for Bicycle Riders."

Sternfahrt organisers hope that the demonstration will encourage the creation of a better urban cycling infrastructure that better accounts for the number of people who cycle on a daily basis.

For the first time, all 16 routes (with 75 check points) met in



# Awakening the Alliance

n Although the carfree and disability-rights movements share many goals when it comes to city space, communication between the two movements has been limited. In this article, Arie Farnam, a freelance journalist who is legally blind, takes on both issues and comes up with some



by Arie Farnam

I approached the editor's office with the usual job-interview jitters. At the end of my last year in college, my dream was to be a newspaper journalist. I had already survived two slave-labour summer internships, and I wanted the paid rookie reporter job at this regional Wisconsin paper.

The editor skimmed over my portfolio briefly, not really appearing to read it. Then, he put his elbows on his polished hardwood desk and looked at me long and hard. At last, he said, "It says here that you are legally blind."

I nodded. "That's right, but it doesn't interfere with my work," I said. "The only minor difficulty is that I can't drive."

I had spent a summer riding around rural Oregon on my chunky bicycle covering two beats (environment and courts) for the La Grande Observer. My chunky old bike was fitted with a sign that said, "Caution: Visually Impaired Rider." It caused some confusion and hilarity at intersections but it got the job done. I had also worked as a reporter for The Prague Post in the Czech Republic using public transportation. I had lived in Southwestern Siberia (which I reached on the Trans-Siberian Railroad) and hitchhiked from Zimbabwe to Malawi. I didn't consider not being able to drive a major problem.

But, this editor shook his head. "I just don't believe there is such a thing as a blind journalist," he declared, fidgeting with his papers a bit. "I mean, how would you get to a fire 40 miles out of town if you can't drive?"

"I would ride with the photographer," I shot back, even though I knew I was doomed.

"I'm sorry, but that's just not good enough," he said, slapping down my file with finality.

That was the first time, but not the last, that I encountered car-centred employment discrimination. It can happen to anyone, not just people who physically can't drive. It happens to people who are too poor to

own a car. You can't get a job because you don't have a car. You can't buy a car because you can't get a job. This predicament affects millions of people in the United States alone. Then, there are those who for whatever reason (ecological awareness, fear of accidents or general interest in more human, carfree societies) don't own cars or drive. We are all likely to run up against this kind of discrimination, especially in employment, sooner or later.

In fact, I am one of the lucky ones. Given the tough US anti-discrimination laws protecting people with disabilities, I probably could have sued this particular car-bigot. Many people who don't drive for less obvious reasons (such as wanting to live in a more environmentally friendly way) don't have that protection. I didn't sue, mainly because I was too busy moving on with my career. I got a job with The Nation in New York a month later and, well, that little Wisconsin newspaper just wasn't on my radar anymore.

I am now the Central Europe and Balkans stringer for The Christian Science Monitor, a national and international publication. I have covered Balkan war zones, tracked the coal-mining mafia across the Ukraine, shot a documentary film about Romany ghettos in Central Europe and even took a side trip to the Ecuadorian Amazon to write about the Kichwa tribes. There most certainly is such a thing as a legally blind journalist without a car.

In the spring of 2002,

photographer Kurt Vinion and I backpacked across the Ukraine by train for the Monitor and Magnum Photos. We hiked around the Carpathian Mountains doing a story on the successful inter-ethnic communities there,

// **Drivers automatically assume that any pedestrian not clearly marked out as blind (with a white cane) can see** //

tramped the streets of Kiev for a documentary project about street children and sought out the secretive illegal mining communities in Eastern Ukraine. Certainly, traveling by train and bus in the sleet and rain of a Ukrainian spring

wasn't easy, but my proficiency in local languages more than made up for our cumbersome mobility.

At times, I have found that a car would even be a hindrance. In the Amazon, for example, there aren't many roads, so I traveled by bus across the Andes and then on foot with occasional help from a donkey. But I am not writing all this to brag about how I "showed" that editor back in Appleton because, to be perfectly honest, I'm not absolutely certain that it would be possible for me to be a full-fledged, professional journalist without a car...in the United States.

I left my country because the infrastructure and professional culture in the US is extraordinarily car-dominant and I now live in the Czech Republic permanently. I sometimes jokingly call myself a "transportation refugee," kind of like people who leave their countries because they are poor are called "economic refugees."

And it isn't all a joke. When I first came to Europe I truly felt like a refugee discovering a free country. Suddenly, for the first time in my life, I could simply get up and go visit a friend in another town any time I wanted to. The freedom and independence is >>



## 1. The Car Environment

Although some people with mobility disabilities (i.e., people using wheelchairs or other mobility aids) use cars and some need some sort of motorised individual transport, people with physical disabilities, almost without exception, find environments built for cars extremely difficult (and often impossible) to navigate. Curbs, gutters, potholes, etc. make getting from point A to point B across an intersection a major undertaking for anyone using a wheelchair. The broad spacing of a car-dominant environment makes mobility especially difficult for people who cannot walk long distances.

## 2. Dangerous Drivers

For people with visual and hearing impairments, every driver is dangerous. Drivers assume that any pedestrian not clearly marked out as blind (with a white cane) can see and hear their car clearly. Yet, 90% of people who are considered "legally blind" are not actually totally blind and most do not carry a white cane. Drivers use small hand gestures to wave pedestrians past or tell them

to wait, and assume that their gestures will be seen and heeded in time. But, all too often, people who look quite "normal" cannot see the car, let alone the driver's hand. About 10% of the world's population has impairments that make navigating a car-intensive environment dangerous. Consider that a person may be able to see a car coming, but not know how far away it is, due to lack of depth perception. A driver may assume that a person with tunnel vision can see them because they are looking in their general direction. Drivers often assume that they can swing around a right-hand turn without stopping because the pedestrians will move out of the way, even if their backs are to the vehicle. This doesn't work on deaf people, and neither does the horn or the screeching brakes that the driver ends up trying next.

## 3. Equal Access to the World

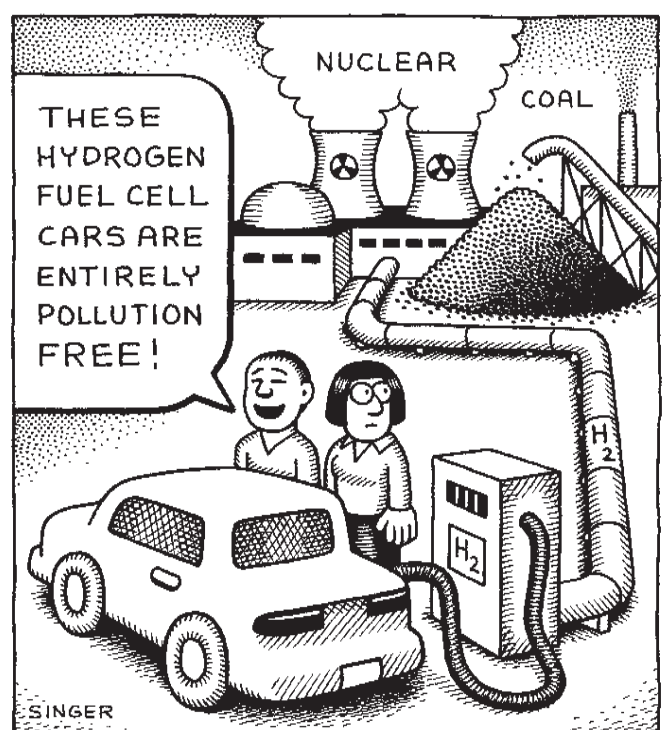
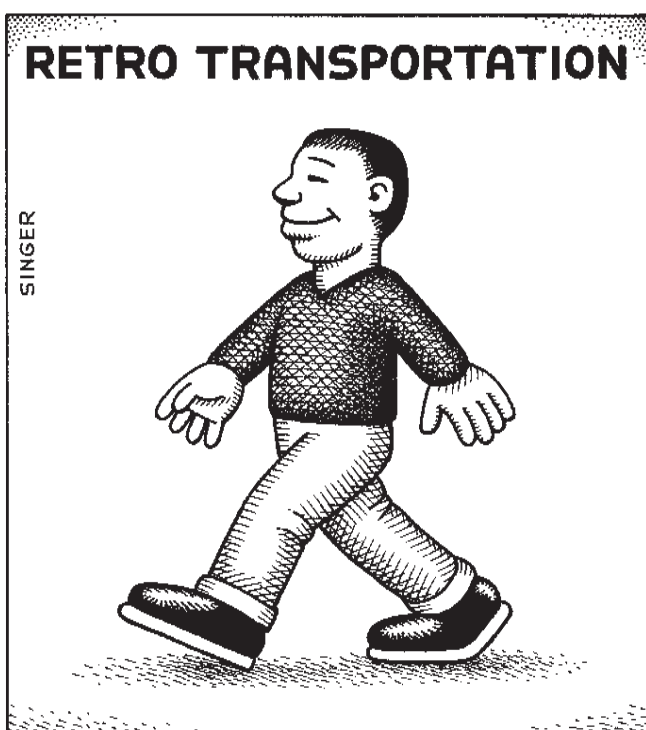
It has often been said that disabilities are not within the individual with some physical difference, but created by a society that does not allow for such differences. There are laws in many countries that



prevent discrimination against people with disabilities, but almost nowhere are there laws prohibiting discrimination on the road. About 15% of the human population has some sort of disability, many more can not drive for a variety of physical reasons. This means that there is a substantial portion of the population which is forever excluded in the car-dominant culture. Where there is little or no public transportation, people with otherwise mild disabilities become severely disabled in terms of their mobility. The predicament of trying to get around without the ability to drive, in a society that assumes that every respectable adult

# NO EXIT

© Andy Singer





# How to Level a Curb

n Grassroots Direct Action Gets the Goods

by Ivan Gregov

**L**et's get concrete! The purpose of this action is to provoke town authorities (and public opinion) to start building bike lanes, or to improve old ones. It can be a good tool for activists in the cities of Eastern and Southeastern Europe, where it was successfully tested in Zagreb, Croatia.

High (non-leveled) curbs are the main obstacle for continuous bike transportation, and curb leveling is a precondition for bike lanes.

[Ed. note: This is true only where the bike lane is above street level. However, the tactic is also useful for facilitating wheelchair access to side-walks (pavements).] If curbs aren't leveled, the authorities have an excuse not to continue bike lanes across pavements and streets.



Leveling hundreds of curbs will require xx thousand euros from city funds. In the case of Zagreb, the city had to pay EUR 400 to level a single curb!

Remember an important detail about this action in the media and public eyes: activists don't destroy, or just talk, or demand change; they actually affect quick and visible change (something positive) – at least at one intersection. Maybe that would be a welcome change in your town's public life.

### What Do You

### Need for This Action?

First, you need to choose a



significant intersection, such as one frequently used by cyclists or in the vicinity of a school, university, town centre, etc. It is best if you can level a curb that obstructs a bike lane (if you have such a situation) to make it more functional.

When you find a good spot for your action, check what the curbs are made of, as some types of concrete or stone are harder than others. Avoid curbs made of stone. Try to level two curbs on each side of the street.

You will also need tools, cement and some gravel or sand (please check and bring all the tools shown here). The approximate cost for all of this is EUR 50-70. Use a sturdy bike trailer or handcart to bring supplies to the location.

Don't forget to invite the press as your action may make a headline or a spot on the evening news! But be careful how you invite them because you don't want the police to stop the action before you have even started.

### The Action!

Remember that you have to be quick and well organised. If necessary, practice in your



backyard before the real action. But even if you finish within an hour, you will probably have to deal with the police for the first 10 minutes. So make sure your group has enough members: two to four people for breaking the old concrete (remember you have two curbs to do!); another one or two people to mix new concrete; one person to talk to the press during the action, and; lastly, one person who is good at talking to the police.

Don't stop car traffic while you work.



Did I mention that in most countries you can't get official permission for a curb leveling action? So, you have to be quick, and kind to police officers, too. Ideas for negotiation might be that "we have the right to provide our means of transportation," or "we are saving public funds."

A couple of things can help in these situations. Making your group known to the media or dressing up in "workers' uniforms" (or similar police-puzzling tactics) will buy you more time.

Curbstone can be removed by loosening its connection to the pavement and adjacent curbs (with a hammer and chisel), or by breaking it into pieces. Try combining both methods. Breaking cement into pieces is very hard to do. It demands a three- to five-kilogram hammer or pick and the strongest person in your group.

Use heavy leather (or, better yet, rubber, if you're vegetarian) protective gloves to avoid hand injuries. Also, only use chisels

# Bogotá Inspires the South

In Car Busters readers are no strangers to Bogotá and its remarkable accomplishments. However, Bogotá's success, suggests Gabrielle Hermann, is inspiring transport planners throughout Latin America and beyond.

by Gabrielle Hermann

**M**any despair that developing countries are becoming cheap

imitations of American cities, with sprawling suburbs and choked-up highways. Recent news out of China about restricted bicycle access and increased motorisation only feeds this fear. There are signs, however, that a more sustainable model of urban development is gaining prominence as word about Bogotá, Colombia's transformation reaches high-level decision-makers in developing countries.

Enrique Peñalosa – the former Mayor of Bogotá who has been instrumental in Bogotá's building of parks, bicycle paths, and the Bus Rapid Transit system Transmilenio – endorses the "Bogotá model" in developing cities around the world.

His stump speech, which has been given in Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, China, Ghana, South Africa, and several Latin American countries, talks about public space as dignity for poor people, highways as "monuments to inequality," and bicycle paths as an indicator for a healthy, equitable society. He suggests that questions about transportation relate to the values of a society, and that developing countries need to blaze their own path toward development. If cities are designed for the comfort and accessibility of pedestrians, bicyclists and children, a more equitable and just society will result.

The winds of activism and communication have brought Bogotá's story to many cities around the world, dispersing seeds of ideas that include carfree days, bicycle paths and a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system known as Transmilenio. Perhaps the seed



*Carfree area in the city centre of Santiago, Chile.*

Manfred Breithaupt/GTZ CD-ROM



*The Trans-Milenio Bus Rapid Transit, which has influenced transport planning throughout Colombia and across Latin America.*

Gabrielle Hermann



Karl Fjellstrom/GTZ CD-ROM

to bear the most fruit has been BRT. Jakarta opened its first BRT line earlier this year, while Tehran, Santiago, Lima, Quito and five

Colombian cities are poised to open systems in the next few years. Lima is a fine example of a city deeply influenced by Bogotá's example. The current mayor of Lima was elected on a pro-metro

platform against the incumbent who had plans to build a Transmilenio-style BRT system. However, once he went to Bogotá and saw how well Transmilenio worked, he changed his policy to one that favoured BRT over metro. There is a fair amount of consensus among transportation planners that BRT is a more sensible option than metro for most developing countries. BRT can achieve the same capacity as most metro systems at a fraction of the cost. That money saved on BRT can then be spent on needed services such as health care, education, or even the building of bicycle paths and parks.

Finally, after three and a half years of touring cities, meeting with government officials, and speaking at universities, Peñalosa and Oscar Diaz's message has started to sink in at higher levels of government. Still, time will

tell if the more radical aspects of Bogotá's transformation can take root and grow in political environments that lack visionary and bold leaders like Peñalosa. The prioritisation of public space, pedestrian avenues and

restrictions on cars have been less successful at capturing the attention of policy makers in other countries because doing

so would risk angering the small but powerful elite that own and rely on automobiles. On the other hand, the success of Bogotá's bicycle paths has caught on and several cities such as Santiago and Lima are building them in conjunction with BRT. There is also a potential for carfree days to flourish

in the Andean region. Already there is talk of Quito taking up the carfree day tradition, while at least five Colombian cities already join in with Bogotá one day in February to restrict cars.

Bogotá's transformation has been a gift to carfree city advocates. Activists can point to Bogotá, which is a poor and large city troubled by civil war, as proof

that prioritising people over cars can reap economic, political and environmental rewards. Peñalosa's message strikes right at the core of what leaders in developing countries care most about: eliminating poverty, job creation,

and safer cities. Even though Peñalosa challenges assumptions about what development should look like, his message is inspiring and sensible for cities that are growing exponentially, and in which the majority of citizens rely on public and nonmotorised transport.

So, how are the lessons from Bogotá affecting the politics and transportation decisions of other cities? To answer these questions, let's look at Lima, a city of comparable size (7 million) to Bogotá. With 80% of its citizens using public transport, Lima is one of the least car-



dependent cities in Latin America, and yet, paradoxically, it has some of the worst traffic. Attempts to build a metro only resulted in millions of dollars in debts and a 10 km-long metro located in a sparsely populated upper-class suburb. To this day, the metro has never functioned as anything more than a free joy-ride for residents and meanwhile Lima has no regulated public transit system. The result is pure chaos, as nearly 300,000 polluting public transport vehicles (mini-vans, mini-buses and taxis) reign free and viciously compete for a fixed number of passengers. Their profits and quality of life are so bad that even some of the private bus operators are pressuring the municipality to regulate the system through a Transmilenio-style system. Many work 12-hour shifts and sleep in their vehicles during the week. Building a BRT system in conjunction with bicycle paths could literally transform the entire city of Lima, making it



# Ecotopia Biketour 2004

n From Vienna to The Netherlands in 40 days

by Roeland Kuijper

**H**oly Moses, what a ride! Vienna, 1<sup>st</sup> of July, Biketour kicked off with a literally smashing "ONE LESS CAR" action. Towing "the golden car" behind our bikes through the streets using about 6 bikes plus a 3-person tandem and a guy on a high bike in front, leading the rest of the Biketour procession. We dragged the unholy ness onto the square from the alternative WUK center where we turned it into an art piece with an artistic, rhythmic car destruction theatre. If there were any doubts about positive group vibes before, they got shattered into pieces together with the car glass. This was a surprisingly nice first taste of Biketour for most of the people. Almost right after, we started our "Demonstration of Sustainable Transport" along a planned extension of the A5 highway, dressed up with colorful placards against this evil development. We spend the night by an Austrian farmer who made us feel at home in no time. He had

lots of local organic vegetables for dinner, wood to get the fire started, and bought some beer for us. Now that's what we call a nice accommodation! For me personally, every sleeping place was like a surprise, and often I thought: "wow, this is the best and coolest accommodation which we had!" and the places kept on getting better. Ofcourses not all accomodations were as nice as they could have been: the arrangements for Prague were not optimal. We arrived very late at our meetingpoint and while we were waiting under a bridge in the center, thunderclouds gathered above us. We had to splitt our group in two. After a wet ride where we had to stick together, with two more flat tires, one group arrived at their remote accommodation. Everybody was happy to finally be there and

would like to forget about the rest of the day but then... disaster struck and Mark's bike got stolen out of a garden with biketour people around..??!! Mark had to go back to England but came back for the last part of the tour! The next day we gathered in the park Kampa close to the Vltava

//  
quote here...

river to prepare for the body painted bike ride. People were a bit shy in the beginning but when the first rough brushes drew cold lines on our hot bodies, everyone got in the right mood. It turned out to be a very colorful kind of Critical Mass which made it to national television..

//

From Prague we mainly followed the Elbe through its magnificent valley and enjoyed changes in the landscape as we approached Germany. We passed the border and headed for Dresden where had an appointment with our



beloved Uli. We have to put a special thanks here for Uli and her Mother. everything was perfectly prepared and we felt very welcome on our two days of stay in Dresden. On our arrival, a delicious soup and salad plus bread, rolls, lots of spreads, and all organic, Supporting a local group against the building of another bridge in Dresden was the action for the next day. The bridge would just increase the overall amount of traffic passing through the city. Same old story: "We need this bridge, it is good for (y)our economy." We made placards and gathered on a beautiful meadow bank where the bridge is planned. We did a kind of Critical Mass bike ride but with police guidance. We went to the center and unfurled a giant banner, which shows a huge pink bridge in position. We tried to raise public awareness by handing out leaflets.

The border cross from Czech Republic to Germany was a pleasant change of bike paths. We were going through an area called Lauzits, the name indicates that there should be lots of water in the area. We headed for Lacoma, a kind of protest eco-village that is resisting structural demolition. The people living there are incredible wood artists, ecologists, students but most of all very sweet and open. Their problem: a Swedish company Vattenfall owns the land and the village. They are interested only in the brown coals, which are under the village and the huge wetlands belonging to it. Sweden is told to be a clean and enlightened country, but Vattenfall is buying up the most polluting and destructive energy projects in Eastern Europe. In the meanwhile they keep advertising with how green and clean they are. The wetlands behind the village form a protected natural area. An environmental impact assessment has shown that the swamps house a huge number of endangered species; some of them are on the "red"-list. But in cases of economical interest this red list is ripped to pieces and burned together with the brown coals. In order to actually start

mining brown coal, a three-year period of artificial desertification has to take place. They pump groundwater out to a depth of 70 meters. Vattenfall didn't get a green light for mining the brown coals but has anyway started the extraction from the groundwater. Several hundred huge pumps places systematically, about 70 meters away from each other, are pumping 750 liters A MINUTE out of this rich biotope. After the mining there will be a big acid lake surrounded by a 70-meter deep and several kilometers long desert. Vattenfall has to restore the area in a similar state (which took Mother Earth several million years, so this is impossible) Sollution: they plant genetically modified, monocultural, fast growing threes. This means that it takes up to 75 years till the groundwater is back on its old level. It's an absolute disaster.. We went to see the closing open cast mine. The size of this disaster shocked me deeply. This horror has been going on in this region for years and the result is 13 billion cubic meters of missing ground water The forest we drove through in this area, were monstrous monocultures. Please support friends of Lacoma: <http://www.lacoma.de/english.html>

A few days later we arrived in Berlin at about 9 in the evening, Thunderclouds started gathering above us like they did

in Prague... What's the thing with capital cities? We went to our sport hall accommodation on the site where our friend and carfree architect Markus Heller is planning the 1<sup>st</sup> carfree quarter of Berlin. Unfortunately the German secret service is thinking about building a new office on the exact same place. What a coincidence, right?

Ofcourse we visited the all famous Towards Car-Free Cities IV Conference which started with a spectacular presentation of all participants. Great People, Great Workshops, Great food, Great evening programme and Great new worldwide contacts. In short: It was a Great and usefull Conference!

JANUN, a German green youth network, organized the route from the Wendlandcamp, a anti nuclear activist camp with a long history, loads of interesting people and more great workshops,. They planned some actions on the way like anti road protest in Lunenburg and a consumer-critic action in



photo: Kristina Skaburskyte

# Is This the End of Space As

by Steven Logan

One morning, the people awoke from a fitful sleep to discover that space had disappeared and left behind a note that read, "the spacist did it." Who exactly is a spacist and what was it that he, she, or it did?

Readers might be asking themselves how exactly is it possible for space to disappear. What would remain if space was gone? The desperation of the situation I am about to describe calls for a radical re-interpretation of space that has a face, feelings and a heartbeat.

For example, we might imagine space as a small deer drinking water from a pond in a green meadow. Unfortunately, we must then also imagine the deer hunter – speed – waiting to eradicate our little deer. The hunter does not care about the deer's feelings, only about the speed and accuracy with which he can conduct the kill.

Of course, only a deranged writer would imagine the space around him to be like a little deer, but perhaps by imagining space in this way, we will realise that space has become a simple blur whose guts are seen through the stained blue windshield of an affectionately and ironically named Explorer that runs down our little deer crossing from one meadow to the next.

**What About Those Spacists?**  
The demented children of a society that ignores space are, to take one example, spacists who park their cars where they please – on sidewalks, crosswalks, and pleasant, grassy areas – because they certainly do not perceive space as a gentle deer, but an inconvenient obstacle to their iron beasts of speed.

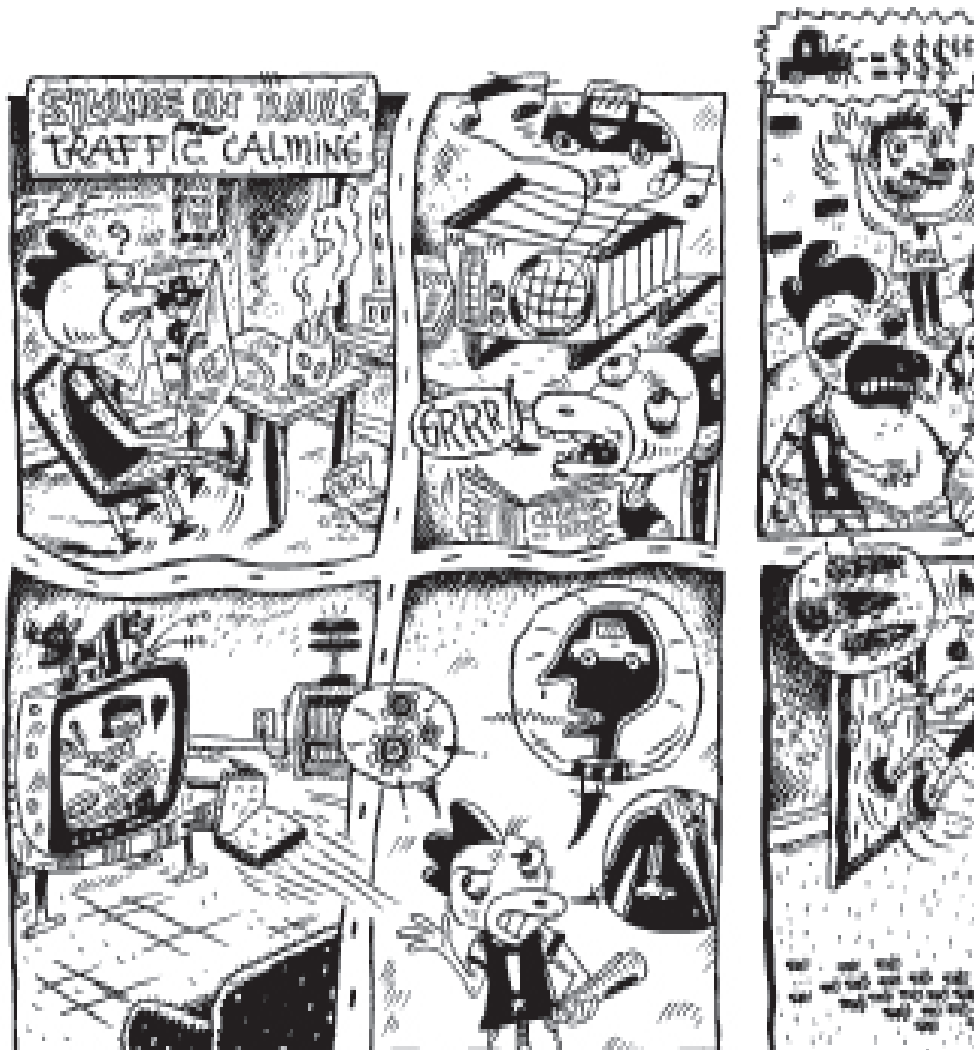
I think



Steven Logan

In our frantic desires to penetrate space with greater technological prowess, we fail to see how we are very much corrupting space and denying its

autonomy and freedom to choose the kind of life it would like to live. Instead space's lot in life is a tar-soaked destiny of



concrete nightmares and parking lot fevers. Unfortunately, the violence of speed has become the destination itself. Space is a mere afterthought.

This line of thought is the essence of spacism, where spacists say to the space that they are des-roying, "you are small, insignificant, and unimpor-tant; look how we triumph over you!"

I hear your objection: don't be ridiculous, no-body talks to space! But isn't this precisely the problem? To live in a more just world and destab-ilise spacism is to start thinking of space as if it were a living being (it needn't be a furry, little deer in all cases).

Depressed Spaces

To make this more clear for our readers, let us take the example of street spaces. We often walk down a busy, polluted street

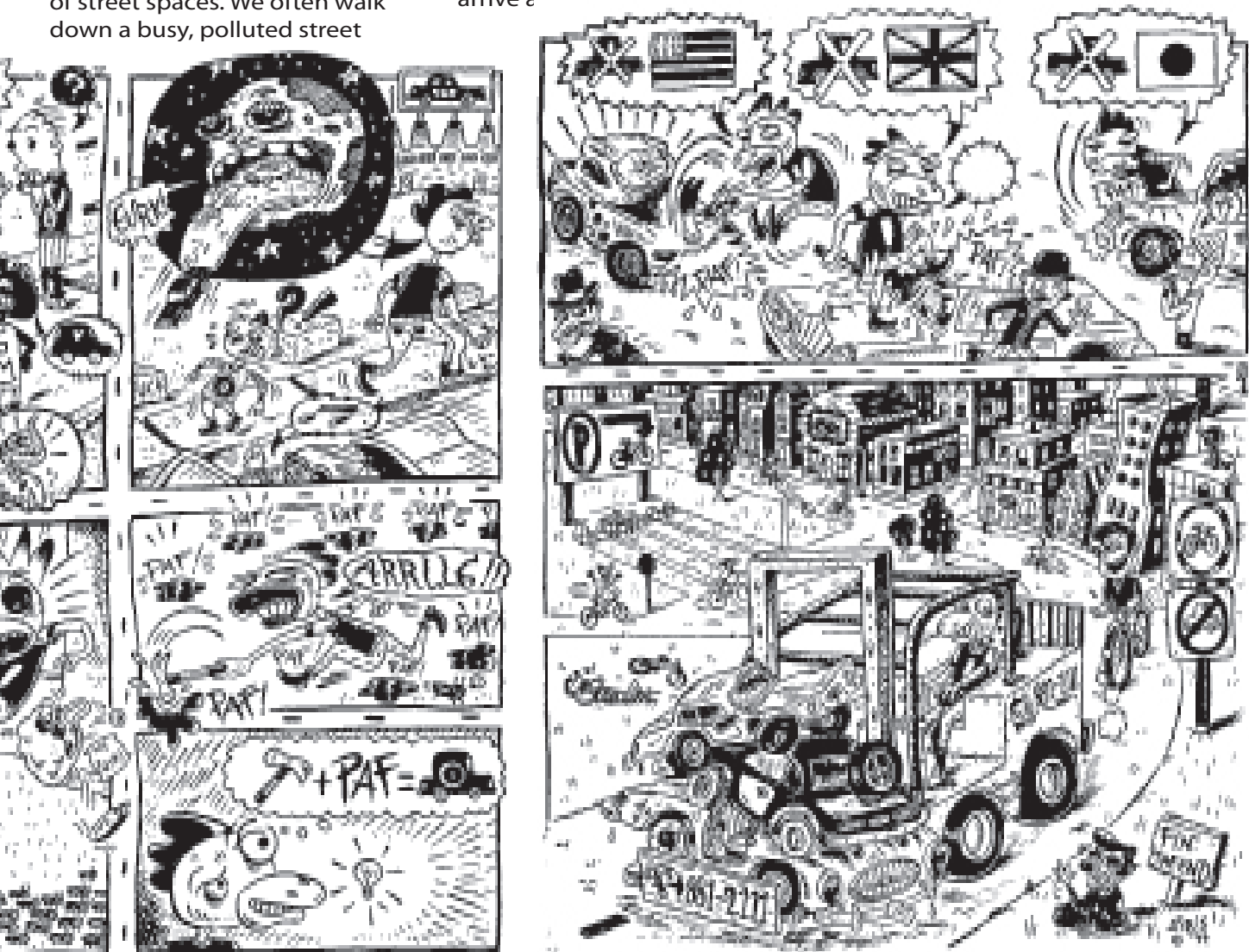
with too many cars and no nice shops, and remark that the street is depressing. Yet, what if, after further thought in light of spacism, we remarked that the street itself is depressed?

Why don't we think of the space when a fast food chain splatters its advertising innards, in the form of a giant billboard, over the side of a 19th-century building? We should be thoughtfully considering how we have offended that space's aesthetic sensibility and depressed it.

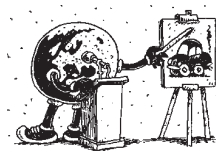
When a supermarket and parking lot colonise space, did their architects ever think of the kind of existence that the space wanted to live? Of course not! Space is denied its right to a fruitful and fulfilling life as the storm troopers of construction arrive and pour out the concrete

Do the automakers, those unrepentant spacists, contemplate whether or not their mostly awkward vehicles will fit into the spaces they are sent out into? Since the answer is a resounding no, then we should institute, in addition to parking and speeding tickets, a system of aesthetic and spatial violations.

Cars are the global foot soldiers on the front line in the war against space. They destroy the aesthetic and historical sensibility of a street, bringing along with them the hammer and sickle of spacism. Unlike the Iron Curtain that hung along defined national borders during the tyranny of another of humanity's isms, the Steel Machines remain firmly in place, and in space, without any easily discernable



# Skill Sharing



Sara Stout

## How to Make a Street



by Sara Stout

**M**aybe you're longing to see the streets of your city free of cars, but

you're waiting for the mayor to declare a carfree day. Or maybe you've thought about eliminating the car traffic from your favourite intersection by having a Reclaim the Streets party, but, like me, you live in a place where automobile right-of-way is so sacred that any unauthorised blocking of traffic is likely to result in an attack from riot cops with all the trimmings, like pepper spray, verbal abuse, bruised limbs, arrest and hefty fines.

You don't necessarily have to risk bodily harm from law enforcement or be the mayor of your city to liberate the streets from motor vehicles. If you're willing to jump through a few hoops by applying for a permit, chances are you too can transform your streets into carfree zones, at

least for a day.

The details of the permit process are bound to vary from city to city but in their essentials will be pretty similar. For a block party – a street closure on a residential street – you will need to get signed permission from all adjacent property owners. Closures on high-volume streets are “commu-nity events” and require greater community and political support, as well as a bit more paperwork and advance planning. A large city like New York might require that applications for community events are submitted a year in advance. In Port-land, applications are accepted up to a month in advance for community events and two weeks in advance for block parties. The general rule seems to be, the bigger the street closure, the more ad-vance notice everyone likes to have.

Permit fees for street closures may be nom-inal, like they are in

Portland, but rates vary widely. New York City's block party permit fee is \$15, while Seattle charges \$94 and requires a \$200 cleaning deposit. Don't be discouraged by expenses. Chances are you will be able to find some organisation or individual willing to sponsor your carfree event. Often the transportation department will even waive fees if your event promotes alternative transportation.

It is best to obtain a street closure permit application early on, so you can get an idea of what you will need to do and what some of your expenses will be. Think big! Consider applying for a huge street closure permit to transform your city's central arterial street into a pedestrian plaza for the day. By applying for a big street closure, you will become very familiar with the permit process and you will then be poised to close streets to car traffic throughout the year. Make



sure to include some side streets in your application, so that if your big street closure permit is denied, you can still have a block party. Once you are well-versed with the procedures, write up a programme that details how to navigate the permit process in your town and distribute widely.

### Twelve Steps to Street Closure

1. Pick a date and time for the carfree event.
2. Get a permit application from your city's transportation department. Some cities will have a web-site with the permit process and application on-line and a phone number for questions.
3. Write a short letter about who will benefit from this street closure.
4. Create a petition for a representative from each adjacent property to sign, stating something like this: We, the undersigned, are in favour of closing the street adjacent to



Sara Stout

*The Mississippi Street Fair is the biggest street closure in Portland without corporate sponsorship. This was the scene from the most recent fair on May 20.*

- our property to car traffic on the day/evening of xx between the hours of xx. Make columns on the petition for (printed) name, signature, address and date.
5. Go out and drum up those signatures.
6. For a community event, you'll probably need a letter of support

- from the neighbourhood association that presides over the area. It is best to write a letter for them to sign, so they don't have to do too much work and to clarify for them what will happen and how their community will benefit.
7. Obtain liability insurance from the neighbourhood or district



Brigid Whipple

*The alternative to officially organised street closures are informal gatherings, such as this unpermitted street brunch (also pictured on previous page).*

# Studies & Reports



Give the Roads to the People  
Want to truly control traffic? Then remove the barriers separating pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. So says Ben Hamilton-Baillie, the author of "Initiating a Revolution in Road and Streetscape Design across the Regions."

The orderly nature of many streets gives drivers the impression that the streets are there for them. As an alternative, Hamilton-Baillie



*The open road of the future?*



offers a more "disorderly" street with roundabouts and no centre dividers, a street open to pedestrians. Such streets force drivers to pay more attention and to slow down. <[www.hamilton-baillie.co.uk/Streetscapes\\_Conf.pdf](http://www.hamilton-baillie.co.uk/Streetscapes_Conf.pdf)>

## Rail Transit is Good for You

A new study by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute finds that cities with rail transit systems have significantly less traffic congestion, lower traffic accident rates and lower consumer costs.

"The Comprehensive Evaluation of Rail Transit Benefits" by Todd Litman analyses the impacts of different types of transit on urban transportation patterns.

The study found that cities with large rail transit systems have on average 400% higher per capita transit ridership, 390% higher transit commute mode split, 36% lower per-capita traffic fatalities, 14% lower per capita consumer transporta-

tion expenditures, 19% smaller portion of house-hold budgets devoted to transportation, 21% less per capita motor vehicle mileage, 33% lower transit operating costs per passenger-mile, and 58% higher transit service cost recovery. More information at <[www.vtpi.org/railben.htm](http://www.vtpi.org/railben.htm)>

## Can Sustainable Transport Be Made Acceptable?

David Banister and John Pucher of University College London and Rutgers University look at sustainable transport, dividing arguments in its favour into economic and energy benefits. The authors develop the concepts of sustainable transport and energy use through reviewing trends and the policy measures being proposed in the EU and the US. <[policy.rutgers.edu:16080/papers](http://policy.rutgers.edu:16080/papers)>

## Speed Humps Reduce Risk

A comprehensive five-year study by a team of Oakland, California doctors has found that children living on blocks with speed humps have a 53% to 60% lower chance of being injured or killed by motorists.

The study, "A Matched Case-Control Study Evaluating the Effectiveness of Speed Humps in Reducing Child Pedestrian Injuries," is featured in the April

2004 American Journal of Public Health. <[www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/94/4/646](http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/94/4/646)>

## Pollution Hits Poor Hardest

According to a report released in May by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), environmentalists and political parties would secure wider public support if they were more effective at linking environmental issues to poverty and ill health.

IPPR's research says industrial



sites are disproportionately located in deprived areas, and children living in deprived areas are five times more likely to be killed by a car. The report considers the links between sustainable development and social justice across society – at the global, national and local levels. In developing countries, the links between poverty and environmental issues are "almost indistinguishable," one the report

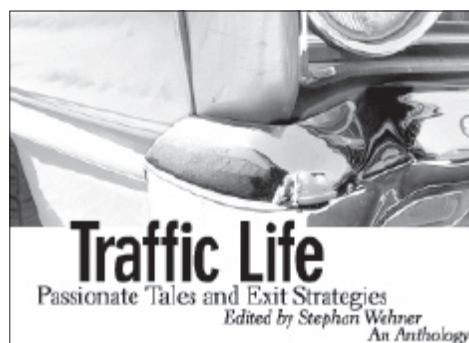
# Book Reviews



## Traffic Life

S. Wehner ed., Wandering Soliton, Vancouver, 2004;  
ISBN: 0-9734022-0-2

Traffic Life, edited by German-born Canadian



resident Stephan Wehner, addresses "the nuisance of cars and the problems of traffic" through 254 pages of stories, poems, drawings, cartoons,

colour photos, and other documentation which will cheer those in the growing global anti-car subculture.

Big names include Ray Bradbury and Harlan Ellison, both of whom have classic stories reprinted, and Andy Singer, whose "No Exit" cartoons are icons of the carfree movement. Also notable are Ken Avidor's Roadkill Bill comic commentaries, Kenneth De Crescenzo's understated but evocative "My Ride,"

and the practical Right of Way Manifesto. Other pleasant surprises are colour

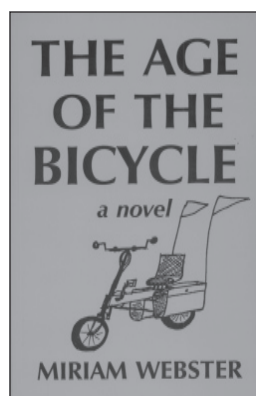


*From the chapter "The War for the World: Three Sculptural Views" by Jeff Mann, inspired by ads that use the cowboy image to sell trucks.*

## The Age Of The Bicycle

Miriam Webster, Zinka Press, Penn., USA, 1998; ISBN  
0-9647171-2-3

Wow, what a ride! When I got my hands on this book



and took a question-ing look at the cover, I couldn't have dreamed that this book was going to put a spell on me like "Sizzling Love #3" did to Helen...

I read it in one breath. I totally lost responsibility, time and my sense of reality, only to get it back in an enlightened state eight hours later.

This book takes you on a trip to Tinny Waters, Texas, where like magic, the cars suddenly stop running. Nobody knows how or why; but oddly enough there is no real panic.

People start walking and riding their bikes to work. The production from a high variety of human-powered vehicles becomes a new booming business. Tinny Waters changes, as tea shops burgeon on the interstates and rush-hour traffic goes by on bicycles and tricycles at an average speed of eight miles an hour.

Nature begins reclaiming her territory, as the air clears up. People get physical exercise and, without even thinking about it, start a healthy new life.

The highways and several other roads which had been impassable bor-ders, can now be crossed wherever anyone wants to. Even old people hit the streets at their own speed, without the fear or risk of being run over by a speeding car. Murder and crime rates decline considerably.

Racism is now only a bad dream from "the age of the automobile" where, to a great extent, roads played the role of borders between "black and white." Big shopping malls and monopolising corporations go broke and small businesses sprout up everywhere. The people living in Tinny Waters form a multicultural society.

People admire the small things which they never used to see on their daily commute to and from work. They can smell scents again and finally get to know the people who had been living next to them in Tinny Waters for years. I could really feel community life in Tinny Waters growing page by page.

But...not everything in this book is roses and sunshine.

Readers will also encounter a truly strange and scarily realistic mirror world called "Hogville," in



# Resources



Carfree Cities  
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EUR 30 / US\$30 / £21  
shipping included

NEW



The famous "One Less Car" sticker is multilingual. Show drivers that your bike is not a part of the traffic problem. If you can't find a bike sticker in your own language, send us the translation and we'll make the famous sticker even more famous!

## NONFICTION

### Asphalt Nation

Jane Holtz Kay, 1998, 440 pages  
EUR 23, £16, US\$23, AU\$40, or CZK 670

### Bike Cult

*The Ultimate Guide to Human-Powered Vehicles*  
David Perry, 1995, 570 pages  
EUR 32, £22, US\$32, AU\$55, or CZK 935

### Carfree Cities

J.H. Crawford, 2000, 324 pages  
hardcover: EUR 40, £28, US\$40, AU\$68, or CZK 1,180  
paperback: EUR 30, £21, US\$30, AU\$52, or CZK 885

### Car Busters Graphics Book

*Car Busters*, 1999, 44 pages  
EUR 5, £3.50, US\$5, AU\$9, CZK 125

### Critical Mass

*Bicycling's Defiant Celebration*  
Chris Carlsson, editor, 2002, 256 pages  
EUR 23, £16, US\$23, AU\$40, or CZK 670

### Cutting Your Car Use

*Save Money, Be Healthy, Be Green!*  
Anna Semlyen, 2000, 160 pages  
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

### Direct Action Manual

*Earth First!*, 1998, 152 pages  
EUR 6, £4, US\$6, AU\$10, or CZK 150

### Divorce Your Car

*Ending the Love Affair With the Automobile*  
Katie Alvord, 2000, 320 pages  
EUR 20, £14, US\$20, AU\$35, or CZK 500

### Ecocities

*Building Cities in Balance with Nature*  
Richard Register, 2002, 290 pages  
EUR 20, £14, US\$20, AU\$35, or CZK 500

### For Love of the Automobile

*Looking Back Into the History of Our Desires*  
Wolfgang Sachs, 1992, 227 pages, hardcover  
EUR 40, £28, US\$40, AU\$68, or CZK 1,180

### The Geography of Nowhere

James Howard Kunstler, 1994, 304 pages  
EUR 17, £12, US\$17, AU\$29, or CZK 500

### Home from Nowhere

*Remaking Our Everyday World for the 21st Century*  
James Howard Kunstler, 1998, 320 pages  
EUR 17, £12, US\$17, AU\$29, or CZK 500

### Life Between Buildings

Jan Gehl, 2001, 202 pages, fourth English edition  
EUR 20, £14, US\$20, AU\$35, or CZK 500

### New City Spaces

Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzoe, 2001, 263 pages  
hardcover: EUR 55, £38, US\$55, AU\$95, or CZK 1,620

### Street Reclaiming

*Creating Livable Streets and Vibrant Communities*  
David Engwicht, 1999, 207 pages  
EUR 23, £16, US\$23, AU\$40, or CZK 670

### Sustainability and Cities

*Overcoming Automobile Dependence*  
Peter Newman and Jeff Kenworthy, 1999, 350 pages  
EUR 46, £32, US\$46, AU\$80, or CZK 1,350

### Wise Fool Basics

K. Ruby, *Wise Fool*, 1999, 96 pages  
EUR 13, £9, US\$13, AU\$22 or CZK 375

## "FREESOURCES"

A growing selection of free texts available in several languages and file formats from <www.carbusters.org>:

- *Energy and Equity* by Ivan Illich
- *Hypermobility* by John Adams
- *American Ground Transport* by Bradford Snell
- *Time Pollution* by John Whitelegg
- *The Importance of the Car to the Modern Economy*
- *Depaving the World* by Richard Register

## FICTION/KIDS

### The Age of the Bicycle

Miriam Webster, 1998, 270 pages  
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

A quirky novel of love, magic, river gods and the mysterious end of the Automobile Age. Combining fairytale possibilities with sharp social satire to produce a novel to entertain children and adults alike.

### Alice in Underland

Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1999  
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250



"A curious mixture of nonsense, social satire and surrealist fairy tale, which takes the classical Alice through the dreary landscape of suburban America." Entertaining and insightful.

### Family Mouse Behind the Wheel

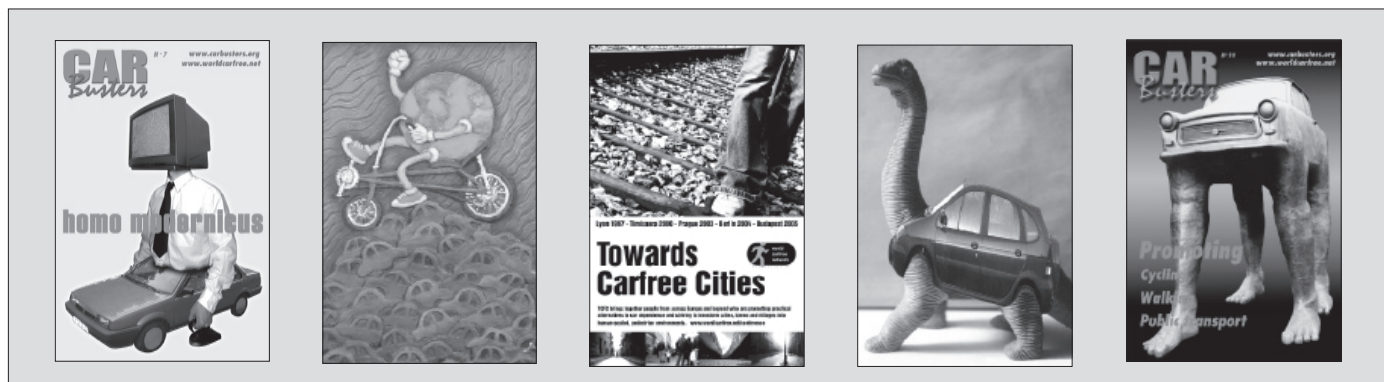
Wolfgang Zuckermann, 1992, 30 pages  
hardcover: EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

This colourful book teaches children the problems of car culture through the eyes of a family of anthropo-morphised forest mice, who decide to buy a car, build a road into their previously intact forest home, and eventually, create an urban hell. An eye-opener complete with the obligatory moralistic message.

### The Little Driver

Martin Wagner, 2003, 56 pages  
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 250

Joe always dreamt of driving his own car. When his wish comes true and he takes his brand-new sports car for a spin through town and country, his adventures soon take a turn for the unexpected. A children's book for young and old, *The Little Driver* takes a fresh look at our obsession with cars through the eyes of a boy still young enough to take nothing for granted.



Hot off the press: Among our new line of Car Busters postcards, the above designs expand our range of consumer products for the entire family! An assortment of ten postcards costs EUR 5 / US\$5 / £3.50.



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on over 130 books and other resources on transportation and urban ecology.

## VIDEOS, ETC.

### Autoschreck / Car-Fright

1994, English and German versions, PAL format only  
EUR 20, £12.50, US\$20, AU\$36, or CZK 600



The car is taking over the city. Michael Hartmann refuses to bow to them, refuses even to divert around the cars illegally parked on the pavement (sidewalk). *Autoschreck* is a document-tary about a man discharged from a mental hospital for being perfectly normal. He was just giving the cars a taste of their own medicine.

### We Are Traffic!

1999, 50 min., PAL or NTSC format  
EUR 25, £17.50, US\$25, or CZK 735



A chronicle of the history and development of the "Critical Mass" bicycle movement from its beginnings in San Francisco in 1992 to its global spread.

### Return of the Scorcher

1992, 30 min., PAL or NTSC format  
EUR 25, £17.50, US\$25, or CZK 735



A look at bike culture around the world with beautiful and inspiring scenes of bike use filmed in China, The Netherlands, Denmark and the USA.

### MATE Booklet and Map

(Map of Activities on Transport in Europe), A SEED Europe, 2000  
EUR 7, £4, US\$7, AU\$12, CZK 200



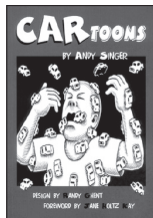
A comprehensive guide to what is happening in the spider-like murky web of European transport, including an overview of TENs and TINA projects.

## CAR BUSTERS PRESS

**Bulk Discount:** Ten or more "CARtoons" and/or "Roadkill Bill" books, any combination, for half price.

### CARtoons

Andy Singer, 2001, 100 pages, optional CD-ROM contains high-resolution TIF images of all graphics  
Book: EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 150  
CD-ROM: EUR 4, £2.50, US\$4, AU\$8, or CZK 80

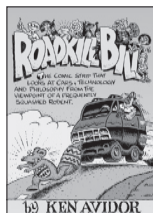


A personal and provocative look at our relationship with the car, from Ford's first assembly lines to today's "drive-through" society. Features seven pithy chapter texts and a compilation of hard-hitting quotations, plus 90 of Singer's infamous graphics (available for free nonprofit reuse).

### Roadkill Bill

Ken Avidor, 2001, 108 pages  
EUR 10, £7, US\$10, AU\$18, or CZK 150

It's the comic strip that looks at cars, technology and philosophy from the viewpoint of a frequently squashed rodent. Here the wonderful, provocative, amusing and sometimes gruesome cartoons are collected together for the first time. Avidor gives voice to the suffering soul of humanity that feels bulldozed and paved over by in-dustrial technology



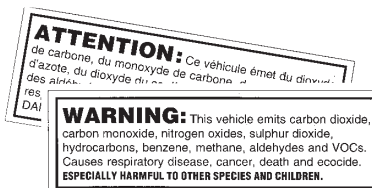
## STICKERS



### "One Less Car" Bike Stickers

Available in Chinese, Czech, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Irish, Italian, Norwegian/Swedish/Danish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Spanish and Welsh. Sized for bike frames, water-resistant.

Ten stickers: EUR 2, £1.40, US\$2, AU\$3.50, or CZK 50



### "Cancer Warning" Stickers

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Forty-six centimetres long. Bright red. These big glossy vinyl stickers are just the right size to go under the word "STOP" on stop signs. Perfect for



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Distribution Orders (5 or more copies): EUR/US\$2.60 each or equivalent (you sell at EUR/US\$4 and keep the difference). In Eastern

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WORLD CARFREE NETWORK WORKS TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN THE GLOBAL CARFREE MOVEMENT. ITS PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS ASSIST PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD TAKING ON CAR CULTURE AND PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF LIFE. WE AIM TO FACILITATE EXCHANGE AND COOPERATION AMONG ACTIVISTS AND CAMPAIGNERS, REACH OUT TO THE PUBLIC, INSPIRE NEW ACTIVISTS AND CHANGE THE WORLD.

- INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
- PRINT AND ON-LINE RESOURCE CENTRE
- ANNUAL CONFERENCES

- WORLD CARFREE DAY COORDINATION
- MONTHLY E-MAIL NEWS BULLETIN
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[includes a one-year magazine subscription and two books out of three: CARtoons, Roadkill Bill, The Little Driver. (circle two)]

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# Announcements



## World Carfree Day

As September 22 approaches and carfree day plans are underway, it is comforting to know that there are easily accessible resources on-line to help people organise an event which will bring real change to the community. These resources can help you make your carfree event a success.

The World Carfree Days Collaborative, featured on Ecoplan.org bills itself as an open platform for international exchange, cooperation and support. There is a wealth of information and links for planning World Carfree Day.

Under the European Union's "In Town Without My Car!"/European Mobility Week is their charter document published at <[www.22september.org](http://www.22september.org)>. Furthermore, Richard Evans, UK Coordinator for this programme, suggests looking at their good practice guide and other pages, at <[www.itwmc.gov.uk](http://www.itwmc.gov.uk)>.

Of course, Car Busters itself has a web page devoted to World Carfree Day, which can be accessed via the main page. As well, stay tuned for transcripts of the Towards Carfree Cities IV conference, as there will be workshops on carfree day organising strategies, and the results will be posted on the website.

## Eliminating

### Harmful Subsidies

Clean Air Action Group, European Environmental Bureau, and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences are organising an international conference on environmentally harmful subsidies and ways to eliminate them from September 2 to 3 at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest.

Governments are keen on reducing state budget deficits, however generally have not yet ventured to contemplate the benefits of removing direct and indirect subsidies, which finance seriously health-damaging and

environment-polluting activities. The aim of the present conference is to stimulate such a process.

Participation in the conference is free. More information and registration form can be found at <[www.levego.hu](http://www.levego.hu)>.

## Cyclists to Tour Mexico

The first nonprofit bike tour along Mexico's Ruta Chichimeca from Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, to Mexico City will take place from July 3 to August 8.

The goals of the tour, approximately 2,210 km in all, include promoting the design and construction of the Ruta Chichimeca, which is to be the backbone of the future National Bicycle Path Network, encouraging Mexican communities to become "Latin American bicycle-friendly cities," and promoting the celebration of World Carfree Day and International Walk to School Day.

The route is organised in segments, and cyclists are invited to participate for one or more days. For more information, contact Agustin Villarreal at <[rutachichimeca@yahoo.com.mx](mailto:rutachichimeca@yahoo.com.mx)>.

## Middle East Peace Cycle

In August and September, The Peace Cycle will gather together cyclists from all over Europe, USA and Australia to ride across Europe to Jerusalem. Part of the aim of The Peace Cycle is to raise funds for humanitarian aid in Palestine and publicise the idea that a just settlement can be reached in Israel that will enable all the people of the area to live in peace. Starting points for the ride are throughout Europe. More information is available at <[www.thepeacecycle.org](http://www.thepeacecycle.org)>.

## Save Tara Hill, Ireland

The Irish government is allowing the construction of a motorway right through the Tara Skryne

## WORLD CARFREE NETWORK ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Towards Carfree Cities IV: July 19-24 in Berlin

Towards Carfree Cities IV will bring together people from around the world who are promoting practical alternatives to car dependence – walking, cycling and public transport, and ultimately the transformation of cities, towns and villages into human-scaled, pedestrian environments rich in public space and community life.

The conference, organised by World Carfree Network in partnership with several German organisations, will focus on strategy, collaboration and exchange, assisting the practical work of conference participants – whether it be organising carfree days, promoting urban cycling, or building the carfree cities of the future.

For more information visit [Worldcarfree.net/conference](http://Worldcarfree.net/conference). Includes English and German versions.

### International Coordination Centre

If the faceless e-mails and conversations with the members of the World Carfree Network coordination centre leave you asking yourself, "I wonder what he/she looks like?," satisfy your curiosity in the "About Us" section of [Worldcarfree.net](http://Worldcarfree.net) where you can find pictures and bios of the ICC staff.

We apologise in advance if our pictures do not live up to your expectations, but to alleviate any of your concerns, we are considering adding David Hasselhoff to our team primarily because of his ability to look strikingly beautiful in head shots (we still are not sure if he is committed to the carfree movement given his hit show

